

COUNT DE ROCHAMBEAU AND BARON DE KALB.

MESSAGE

FROM THE

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

TRANSMITTING

*Documents in relation to the descendants of the Count de Rochambeau and the Baron De Kalb.*

MAY 26, 1834.

Referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

*To the House of Representatives of the United States :*

I transmit a letter from the Marquis de Rochambeau to the minister of the United States in France, (together with a translation of the same,) referring to the petition of certain descendants of the Count de Rochambeau, which was communicated to the House of Representatives with my message of the 22d February, 1833. Extracts from the despatches of Mr. Livingston to the Secretary of State, respecting the same subject, are also sent.

I likewise transmit, for the consideration of the House, a petition from the heirs of the Baron de Kalb, (accompanied by a note from General Lafayette,) praying remuneration for services rendered by the Baron to the United States during the war of the revolution.

ANDREW JACKSON.

WASHINGTON, 19th May, 1834.

AU CHATEAU DE ROCHAMBEAU, DEP. DE LOIRE ET CHER,

Le 17 Mars, 1834.

MONSIEUR LE MINISTRE : Je viens vous répéter ce que j'ai eu l'honneur de vous dire se vive voix.

Seul héritier du nom de Rochambeau, je proteste contre toute demande d'argent qui serait faite en mon nom, au Gouvernement des Etats Unis.

Les services de mon père, de mon grand père, en Amérique, ont été reconnus par votre Gouvernement, qui savait les apprecier à leur juste valeur. Aussi envoyait-il à mon grand père au Chateau de Rochambeau deux pièces de canons qui avaient été prises sur l'armée Anglaise. Elles furent reçus avec reconnaissance, mais ces brillants trophées nous furent enlevés en 1793, au milieu des troubles de la France.

L'ordre des choses change, Monsieur le Ministre, et les souvenirs restent. Aussi ceux que m'ont laissés mes pères, qui ont toujours été guidés par l'honneur et non pas l'intérêt, et dont je m'honore de professer les principes, me font un devoir de vous prier avec instance de vouloir bien mettre sous les yeux du Congrès cette protestation.

J'ai l'honneur d'être, Monsieur le Ministre,

Vôtre très humble, très obéissant serviteur,

Le M<sup>is</sup>. P. de ROCHAMBEAU,

*Ancien Colonel de Cavalerie.*

A Monsieur LE MINISTRE des Etats Unis.

*Translation of a letter from the Marquis de Rochambeau to the Hon. Edward Livingston, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States near the Court of France.*

CHATEAU DE ROCHAMBEAU, DEP. OF LOIRE ET CHER.,

March 17, 1834.

M. LE MINISTRE: I now repeat to you in writing what I had the honor of telling you personally.

As the only heir of the name of Rochambeau, I protest against all demands for money, which may be made in my name on the Government of the United States.

The services of my father and grandfather in America were acknowledged by your Government, which knew their real value; it sent to the Chateau de Rochambeau, for my grandfather, two pieces of canon, which had been taken from the English army; they were received with gratitude; but we were deprived of these brilliant trophies, during the troubles in France of 1793. Things have changed, sir, but recollections remain; those of my ancestors, who were ever guided by honor, not by interest, and whose principles I am proud to profess, make it my duty to entreat that you will lay this my protest before Congress.

I have the honor to be, sir,

Your most obedient servant,

The MARQUIS DE ROCHAMBEAU,

*Late Colonel of Cavalry.*

To the MINISTER of the United States.

*Extract of a despatch from Mr. Livingston, Minister of the United States in France, to Mr. M. Lane, Secretary of State, dated*

PARIS, October 22, 1833.

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I have been strongly urged by General Lafayette, and by the parties themselves, to call the attention of the President to the petitions of the heirs of Count Rochambeau, and of Messrs. Leaumont and De Grammont, which were by him transmitted to Congress, but not acted upon. The daughter of Count Rochambeau is in great poverty.

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The essential services rendered in our revolution by her father, and her destitute condition, create a claim on our gratitude

and humanity: and the much weaker case of the Count de Grasse's family forms a precedent which might be followed, in this case, to the honor of the country. The two other petitioners were meritorious foreign officers in the revolutionary war.

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*Extract of a despatch from Mr. Livingston to Mr. M'Lane, dated*

PARIS, 22d March, 1834.

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You may remember that I some time since requested the attention of the President to a petition which he had sent to Congress from Mad. d'Ambrugeac, one of the grandchildren of Count Rochambeau. A few days since I received the enclosed letter from her brother, the Marquis de Rochambeau, protesting against the use of his name in any application to the United States for relief. He says that Congress rewarded the services of his grandfather, in the way most honorable to him and his family, by their thanks, and the present of two pieces of canon as trophies. He is not rich, but he desires nothing from Congress. His sister, however, is poor, and she is the petitioner. Whether it would not be to the honor of the country for Congress to repair to the brother, by some honorary memorial, the loss of the two cannon, which were taken in the revolution, and give some pecuniary gratification to the sister, the Government must judge. You will observe that the Marquis de Rochambeau requests that his letter may be laid before Congress. I send it for that purpose, if the President should think it proper.

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*To the honorable members of the House of Representatives of the United States of America:*

HUMBLY SHOWETH:

That your petitioners are the descendants and heirs of Baron de Kalb, who, at the period of his decease, held the post of major general in the army of the United States.

That, pursuant to the act of Congress of the 1st January, 1796, and other subsequent acts for regulating the grants of land appropriated to military services during the revolutionary war, the Congress of the United States granted to your petitioners, on the 24th May, 1822, eleven tracts of land, situate in the State of Ohio, in consideration of the services of the late Baron de Kalb, the father and grandfather of your petitioners respectively.

That, unacquainted with the conditions, restrictions, and provisions contained in said acts, and to which, as tenants of said lands, they were subjected, or unaware, rather, that uncleared lands were liable to pay any taxes whatever, your petitioners did not comply with those conditions; but, when acquainted therewith, they lost no time in forwarding the amount of the taxes due for said lands.

That it was with great pain that your petitioners learned, from the agent to whom they entrusted said money for payment, that, before its

arrival, the lands so granted by Congress to your petitioners had been alienated and sold—the two years allowed by law for redemption having expired.

That your petitioners place too great a reliance in the justice and consideration of Congress, to admit the belief that a donation, deemed by Congress so well merited as theirs, should become of no avail to your petitioners, because of a mere and unintentional informality on their part; they therefore pray permission again to submit to Congress a new claim to a portion of the nation's bounty, as if no previous adjudication in their favor had been made.

That, in thus venturing to urge the reconsideration of their case upon Congress, your petitioners respectfully beg leave to repeat their original statement, that the Baron de Kalb was one of the first Europeans of distinction, who, with General Lafayette, offered their services to the American people, and were, of course, among the first to render their cause popular in Europe.

That Baron de Kalb, a brigadier of the armies of France, and listening only to the call of struggling freedom, relinquished the brightest prospects, his wife, children, fortune, to fly to the assistance of an oppressed people, struggling for independence, and that, too, at a moment when the ultimate success of the American patriots was very far from being obvious.

That this determination, your petitioners humbly beg leave to assume, was not without influence in producing in the councils of France the resolve to sustain the cause of America.

That, on his arrival in the United States, at the beginning of the year 1777, Baron de Kalb was invested with the rank of major general, and took an active part in the war, until he gloriously fell at the battle of Camden, on the 17th of August, 1780.

That, in the month of October following, Congress, impressed with the sense of his services, decreed that a monument should be erected, in memory of Baron de Kalb, at the expense of the nation.

That Baron de Kalb left three children—two sons and a daughter; that one of the former perished on the scaffold during the French revolution, and the other, one of the undersigned petitioners, Eli, Baron de Kalb, served in the armies of France; that his daughter married M. Geymuller, a Swiss officer, the issue of which marriage was your petitioners, Rodolphe Theophile and Luc Geymuller.

That your petitioners beg leave, further, most respectfully to state that nothing could be more acceptable to them than a grant of lands, had they the advantage of being citizens of, and residents in, the United States, and of being consequently able to attend to their cultivation; but, without the most remote idea of presuming to question the wisdom of Congress, your petitioners most respectfully entreat leave to observe that a grant of lands, instead of being productive of that which Congress so munificently intended, would become rather a burden than a benefit to them, from the necessity that would exist of their paying taxes for such lands, and the utter impossibility of their being able to dispose of them to any considerable advantage.

That your petitioners beg leave, further, and most respectfully to state, that, in thus devoting himself to the cause of American independence, Baron de Kalb made considerable pecuniary sacrifices, which materially



impaired his patrimony, inasmuch that his two grandsons, your petitioners, Rodolphe Theophile and Luc Geymuller, are utterly destitute of fortune.

That your petitioners beg also to state another fact for the consideration of Congress, namely, that Baron de Kalb, during the entire of his services in the American cause, and up to the period of his death, did not receive any portion whatever of the pay or appointments appertaining to his rank of major general in the army of the United States, nor did his family or heirs subsequently receive any portion thereof.

That your petitioners, emboldened by the splendid marks of national gratitude bestowed upon the Marquis de Lafayette, who, with so much glory to himself, contended in the ranks of American freemen, with the Baron de Kalb, but who, unlike him, had the happiness to survive, and witness the triumph of American valor, humbly pray the taking into consideration the devotion, the sacrifices, and the services of the late Baron de Kalb to and in the cause of America; the destitute condition of his descendants, (owing partly to the pecuniary losses incurred by him, and partly to the fact that those services remained unrequited as above referred to;) the involuntary and unintentional omission which deprived them of a legal claim to that indemnity which the American nation awarded them; and the position of your petitioners, residents in a foreign country, which, of necessity, would prevent the occupancy of any lands granted them in the United States; and your petitioners humbly pray that Congress will, in its wisdom and humanity, direct that the informality which at present precludes them from deriving any benefit from the benevolent intentions of Congress, may not bar that claim which they were originally deemed to have upon the gratitude of the American nation; and, further, that, instead of a similar or any other grant of land, Congress may be pleased to award to them such pecuniary compensation, gift, or donation, as in its wisdom shall seem meet.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will humbly pray.

LE B<sup>r</sup>. DE KALB.

ROD. THEOPHILE GEYMULLER.

LUC GEYMULLER.

PARIS, 25th March, 1834.

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The sense of my obligations to the late Major General Baron de Kalb, as an American patriot and a personal friend, shall ever make me happy to do justice to his memory. Our acquaintance began when, having determined to devote myself to our sacred cause, I availed myself, upon the recommendation of my only confidant, old Count de Broglie, of his knowledge of that officer, who was entering into a personal agreement with the American commissioner, Mr. Deane, to procure a secret communication, in which the necessary secrecy was religiously kept by them and the secretary, Carmichael. Baron de Kalb, then a field officer in the French service, took the advantage of my ship to go over to the United States, and shared in the dangers of the direct passage. He was afterwards employed as a brigadier, and then a major general in the continental army, where his services were crowned by an heroic conduct in the battle of Camden, where he fell covered with glorious wounds. Although those

circumstances are well known in the United States, I think it my duty, and feel particularly gratified to offer to his son and grandsons a special mention of my high esteem for the character and services of their gallant parent.

LAFAYETTE.

PARIS, March 6, 1834.

NEW YORK CORPORATION OF CONTROL NAVIGATION OF HUDSON RIVER



Whereas it is considered of the whole people, that it is expedient for the public good, that the Corporation of Control Navigation of Hudson River should be organized...

To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled:

The Mayor, recorder, aldermen, and commonality of the city of Troy, in the county of Rensselaer, and State of New York, say, ever respectfully to approach your honorable bodies, and to express the deep solicitude...

Your memorialists further represent that the city of Troy, being situated on the western shore of the Hudson river, at the head of its tide and natural deep navigation, early became the landing place and place of deposit...

